

student not only of man in detail but of men in groups when that opportunity, which in this world comes to all men, occurred to Beckendorff, he was prepared. With acquirements equal to his genius, Beckendorff depended only upon himself, and succeeded. Vivian Grey, with a mind inferior to no man's, dashed on the stage, in years a boy, though in feelings a man. Brilliant as might have been his genius, his acquirements necessarily were insufficient. He could not clepepd only upon himself; a consequent necessity arose to have recourse to the assistance of others; to inspire them with feelings which they could not share; and humour and manage the petty weaknesses which he himself could not experience. His colleagxies were at the same time to work for the gratification of their own private interests, the most palpable of all abstract things; and to carry into execution a great purpose which their feeble minds, interested only by the first point, cared not to comprehend. The unnatural combination failed; and its originator fell. To believe that he could recur again to the hopes, the feelings, the pursuits of his boyhood, he felt to be the vainest of delusions.¹

The passage throws an illuminating flash on some of Disraeli's most cherished ideals of character, and on the significance of *Vivian Grey* in relation to those ideals j and incidentally it makes visible the clouds of despondency which were now settling upon Disraeli's mind as they had settled upon his hero's.

It was many a long day before the clouds finally lifted. The three years that followed the publication of the Second Part of *Vivian Grey* are almost a blank in Disraeli's life. As he had now definitely renounced the intention of becoming a solicitor, it was decided that he should at least formally qualify for the other branch of the legal profession; and in April, 1827, he was entered at Lincoln's Inn with a view, in due course, to being called to the Bar. He seems to have kept his terms regularly for nearly a couple of years, but there is nothing to show that beyond eating his dinners and paying his dues he gave any serious labour to preparation for a barrister's career. During all this time, in fact, a mysterious disease held him in its grip and paralysed